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Not fake news: The TV mogul joins '60 Minutes.' 16

The cutest new kids line of kids' decor. 20

Politics slamming the NFL in TV ratings. 22

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President takes first step in building a conservative Supreme Court. 4

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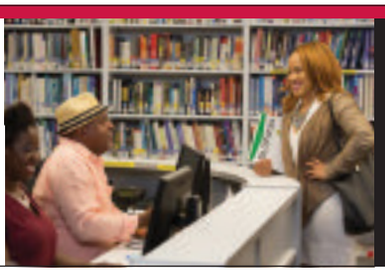

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SAN FRAN SUES TRUMP OVER SANCTUARY ORDER

1 San Francisco filed a lawsuit on Tuesday challenging President Donald Trump's executive order directing the U.S. government to withhold money from cities that have adopted sanctuary policies toward undocumented immigrants. The lawsuit, filed by San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera, marks the first court challenge over the sanctuary order filed by one of the targeted cities.

Trump signed the directive on sanctuary cities on Jan. 25, along with an executive order to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border, as he charged ahead with sweeping and divisive plans to transform how the United States deals with immigration and national security. REUTERS

ADULT SWADDLING THERAPY FAD HITS TOKYO

2 Wrapped up from head to toe in a white bag and gently rocking from side to side, five Japanese mothers are hopeful Tokyo's latest health trend can cure their post-pregnancy aches and pains. According to its exponents, Otonamaki, which translates as "adult wrapping," was devised by a Kyoto midwife who thought replicating how children are swaddled at birth could help mothers overcome post labor shoulder and hip pain. The five mothers at a recent session in Tokyo lay on their backs with their knees on their chests bundled up in white cloths. Staff then helped them rock over cushions "It felt warm and there was this feeling with my body," said one mother who tried the 20 minute session. "I have never experienced this before so its quite hard to describe properly." REUTERS

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE CHARGED WITH MURDER

3 William Shakespeare has been charged with murder. A 29-year-old fugitive bearing the name of the literary giant was accused of killing another man in a Mattapan barber shop on June 14, Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel Conley said in a statement. Shakespeare was arrested Tuesday morning in the Bronx, following an investigation by the NYPD, the Boston Police Fugitive Unit and U.S. Marshals. Authorities said Shakespeare, of Dedham, shot 31-year-old Marcus Hall in what they are calling a "brazen" daytime shooting at a Blue Hill Avenue barber shop. Afterward, he fled to New York City, where he hid out until he was captured, police said. Conley's office secured a first-degree murder indictment against Shakespeare late last year, while he was still being sought. ERIN TIERNAN

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

HARBIN ICE AND SNOW FESTIVAL

5 Tourists enjoy ice-track cycling as they ride through an illuminated ice castle during the 33rd Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival at Harbin Ice and Snow World in Harbin, China. The festival, established in 1985, is held annually on Jan. 5 and lasts over a month. GETTY IMAGES

FRAUD AFFAIR ROCKS FILLON'S CAMPAIGN

4 French police searched presidential candidate Francois Fillon's office in parliament on Tuesday as an inquiry into alleged fake work by his wife threatened his campaign and party leaders began to consider a "Plan B" without him. Fillon had been favorite to win the presidency for the conservative Republicans party until a week ago, when it was reported that his wife Penelope had

drawn hundreds of thousands of euros in pay from state funds without doing any work. Fillon has said his Welsh-born wife, with whom he has five children, did real work for her pay as a parliamentary assistant. She has not commented. An urgent official inquiry was opened last week. REUTERS

WELCOME TO METRO.US!

ERIN TIERNAN, WEB REPORTER

That time the internet freaked out when wealthy, white Connecticut teenagers were asked to describe what "white privilege" means to them.

Read more: metro.us/viral

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Trump taps conservative Neil Gorsuch as nominee for Supreme Court justice

The president fulfills a campaign promise to appoint a conservative judge to the bench.

Judge Neil Gorsuch, left, shakes hands with President Donald Trump after he was nominated for the Supreme Court on Tuesday. GETTY IMAGES

President Donald Trump nominated appellate judge Neil Gorsuch on Tuesday for a Supreme Court post, a jurist who could help shape rulings on such issues such as abortion, gun control, the death penalty and religious rights.

Trump made his choice between two federal appeals court judges, Gorsuch and Thomas Hardiman, according to media reports. Both have strong conservative credentials and were appointed to the bench by former Republican President George W. Bush.

If confirmed by the Senate, Gorsuch will replace Antonin Scalia, a leading conservative voice on the court who died last February.

Democrats, still fuming over the Republican-led Senate's refusal to act on former President Barack Obama's court nominee last year, girded for a fight. Some Democrats have vowed to do everything in their power to block confirmation.

The court, shorthanded for nearly a year, is ideologically split with four conservative justices and four liberals. Trump's pick can restore its conservative majority.

Gorsuch, 49, a judge on the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, would be the youngest Supreme Court nominee since Republican President George H.W. Bush in 1991 selected Clarence Thomas, who was 43 at the time.

> *"Senate Democrats are one of the last remaining checks on Trump's power and they should not let him make a lifetime Supreme Court appointment."*
>
> Friends of the Earth environmental group

Gorsuch joined an opinion in 2013 saying that owners of private companies could object on religious grounds to a provision of the Obamacare health insurance law requiring employers to provide coverage for birth control for women.

Amid partisan tension since Trump took office on Jan. 20, Democrats remain enraged because Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refused last year to allow the Senate to consider Obama's nomination of Judge Merrick Garland for the vacant seat. That action had little precedent in U.S. history.

Gambling that Republicans would win the presidency in the Nov. 8 election, McConnell argued that Obama's successor should get to make the pick. The move paid off with Trump's victory, but the court has run shorthanded for nearly a full year.

A Supreme Court justice can have influence for decades after the president who made the appointment has left office. Trump's appointee could be instrumental in cases involving abortion, gun, religious and transgender rights, the death penalty, presidential powers, environmental regulation and other contentious matters.

Advocacy groups geared up for a fight. REUTERS

The future of Roe v. Wade and abortion rights in America

Women's reproductive rights advocates say they are on the precipice of an unknown.

Some fear accessibility to health care, contraceptives and the right to choose an abortion will be taken away by President Donald Trump, either by an executive order or with the help of a vote by his Supreme Court pick.

Trump's Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch, will likely keep the balance of the highest court in the land as it was before Justice Antonin Scalia died early last year.

Metro spoke to Katharine Bodde, an attorney with the New York Civil Liberties Union, whose practice focuses on gender equity and reproductive rights.

Pro-choice supporters stand in front of the U.S. Supreme Court. ISTOCK

Where does Roe v. Wade stand now?

That's a pretty tricky question. We saw the president assign the global gag rule so foreign [nongovernmental organizations] can't mention abortion in their provision of health care.

I think we are expecting certainly very serious concerns in Congress. … [We] expect a proposal to defund Planned Parenthood. Certainly, the right to abortion care is important, [and for women who can't access abortion care], it is equally important to protect those women as well.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo proposed an amendment to the state constitution that would codify the rights afforded by Roe v. Wade at a state level.

New York was actually one of the first states to legalize abortion three years before Roe v. Wade, but how New York reformed its laws before Roe was to create an exception to the crime of abortion called "justifiable abortion," which is an abortion 24 weeks from pregnancy commencement or, after that point, when the woman's life is at risk. And that still exists. So, technically, abortion in New York state is still in the homicide code.

Will that keep protections in place even if Roe v. Wade is overturned in D.C.?

I think that it's an interesting proposal. We would have to look at any proposal, but it's a pretty serious push to amend the state's constitution. We would have to have abortion removed from the criminal code in New York state. That's the source of confusion with providers.

Can the federal government withhold funding if the state doesn't comply with a new ruling on abortion rights and access, similar to the threats made to sanctuary cities?

There's a lot of different ways to manipulate policy through funding.

Trump announced appellate judge Neil Gorsuch as his SCOTUS pick Tuesday night. Waking up Wednesday, what is different about today?

I think the composition would be technically the same if Trump puts in his pick. We'd have to, of course, go through a process, but once confirmed, the composition would be the same as before Justice Scalia passed.

For more questions about theRoe v. Wade issue, visit metro.us.

KIMBERLY AQUILINA

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Tech vs. Trump: Hundreds in NYC tech community tell Trump 'no ban, no wall'

Foreign-born tech workers are not taking jobs from Americans; they are creating them, Tech NYC's executive director said.

KIMBERLY AQUILINA
@@KimESTAqui
kimberly.aquilina@metro.us

PEXELS

Hundreds of leaders in New York City's technology community are telling President Donald Trump that his travel ban will harm an industry desperately in need of engineers and other highly skilled workers.

A letter circulated on Sunday garnered 400 signatures from CEOs and investors in less than 12 hours.

"I've been putting letters like this together for much of my career and these things never come together in a day," Julie Samuels, the executive director of Tech NYC, a nonprofit organization representing the city's tech sector, told Metro. "It can take weeks. I've never seen the caliber of signatories in one day, especially on a Sunday."

Once the final letter is ready and sent to the White House, Samuels said she expects it will feature more than 1,000 signatures. From there, Samuels said, the tech community will figure out what actions it plans to take, adding, "I can't tell you for certain what the next steps are, but I can tell you there will be next steps."

Samuels said foreign-born workers are vital to America's tech industry, and highly skilled workers entering the country on an H1B visa are not taking jobs from American workers.

"When it comes to tech talent, there's not enough of it in the U.S. We're not producing enough engineers," Samuels said. "This is a problem with the education system.

"We're working with legislatures to fix that so Americans can get the good jobs tech companies are creating, but right now, there is a problem."

> *"When it comes to tech talent, there's not enough of it in the U.S. We're not producing enough engineers."*
> Julie Samuels

Immigrants are also twice as likely to create billion-dollar startup companies and create American jobs, Samuels said.

"They're going to be somewhere," she added. "We'd rather they'd be here."

Samuels said that she is still trying to wrap her head around the idea that tech companies are only concerned about the bottom line, saying tech CEOs signed the letter because changes to immigration "affects the ecosystem, diversity and community that we all live in and work in.

"They want a country and a New York that welcome immigrants. New York is the best place to build a business."

What does it take to impeach a president?

Impeachment is the first step in removing the President of the United States or any other top-ranking official in the government. Though he has been in office for less than two weeks, President Donald Trump already faces calls for his removal, in addition to the numerous and massive protests, rallies and demonstrations against him.

What is impeachment?

During the inaugural oath, a new president agrees to uphold the responsibilities of the office and to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

If a president is found to have abused his or her power or committed "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors" per Article II, Section Four of the Constitution, he or she could be impeached.

In 1970, then-Rep. Gerald R. Ford defined impeachable offenses as "whatever a majority of the House of Representatives considers it to be at a given moment in history."

Congress has issued articles of impeachment for "exceeding the constitutional bounds of the powers of the office," "behavior grossly incompatible with the proper function and purpose of the office" and "employing the power of the office for an improper purpose or for personal gain."

Impeachment, a charge of misconduct, does not immediately signal removal from office.

The process

Starting in the House of Representatives, an article of impeachment can be introduced like any other bill, per Article II of the U.S. Constitution: "The President, Vice President and all Civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors."

The information in the article of impeachment is the basis of the case against the accused official, such as a president. The House Judiciary Committee will decide if a resolution to impeach is in order.

Then the full House has to vote on each article of impeachment, requiring a majority to approve the article, which is then sent to the Senate for trial.

In the Senate

The case is tried in the Senate as if it were a court with House representatives acting as prosecutors, according to Congressional rules.

The chief justice of the Supreme Court presides over the trial with the senators acting as jurors. In a private session, the verdict is debated by the senators.

Then, the Senate holds an open session to publicly vote on the verdict. If found guilty by two-thirds of the Senate, the president would be removed from power and never allowed to hold a government position again.

Following a series of scandals and hearings on the matters, Bill Clinton was accused of lying under oath. GOOGLE COMMONS

No president has ever been convicted by the Senate and removed from office.

For more on a possible Trump impeachment, visit metro.us.

KIMBERLY AQUILINA

Poll: Trump's travel ban polarizes America

Responses were split almost entirely along party lines.

Americans are sharply divided over President Donald Trump's order to temporarily block U.S. entry for all refugees and citizens of seven Muslim countries, with slightly more approving the measure than disapproving, according to a Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll released on Tuesday.

The Jan. 30-31 poll found that 49 percent of American adults said they either "strongly" or "somewhat" agreed with Trump's order, while 41 percent "strongly" or "somewhat" disagreed and another 10 percent said they don't know.

But the responses were split almost entirely along party lines. Some 53 percent of Democrats said they "strongly disagree" with Trump's action while 51 percent of Republicans said they "strongly agree."

Trump's executive order banned refugees from entering the United States for 120 days, and it placed an indefinite hold on Syrian refugees. It also blocked citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

The president, who campaigned on a promise to bring what he called "extreme vetting" to the nation's immigration system, said the order he signed on Friday was meant to protect the country and its borders. "This is not a Muslim ban," he said.

But confusion over who was covered by Trump's order left travelers, airlines and foreign governments scrambling to get clarity from U.S. officials, many of whom were also bewildered.

The Reuters/Ipsos poll found 31 percent of Americans feel "more safe" because of the ban, compared with 26 percent who said they felt "less safe." Some 38 percent said they felt the United States was setting "a good example" of how best to confront terrorism, while 41 percent said the country was setting "a bad example."

Thousands of protesters gather at Battery Park in lower Manhattan for a pro-Immigrant rally the day after President Donald Trump's "Muslim Ban" was issued. AARON ADLER

Democrats were more than three times as likely as Republicans to say that the "U.S. should continue to take in immigrants and refugees," and Republicans were more than three times as likely as Democrats to agree that "banning people from Muslim countries is necessary to prevent terrorism."

Most Americans, however, don't think the country should show a preference for Christian refugees, as Trump has suggested. Some 56 percent, including 72 percent of Democrats and 45 percent of Republicans, disagreed that the country should "welcome Christian refugees, but not Muslim ones."

At the weekend, protesters swarmed major U.S. airports where some immigrants had been temporarily detained because of the order. Lawmakers, including some from Trump's Republican Party, denounced the decision as discriminatory and counterproductive for national security.

More than a dozen state attorneys general said they would work together to fight the order, and the top federal government lawyer, Sally Yates, was fired after she refused to defend it.

The Reuters/Ipsos poll was conducted online in English in all 50 states. It gathered poll responses from 1,201 people including 453 Democrats and 478 Republicans. It has a credibility interval, a measure of accuracy, of 3 percentage points for the entire sample and 5 percentage points for the Democrats and the Republicans. REUTERS

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Why Aren't Doctors Telling About These Two Often

Two Advanced Medical Treatments Every Knee Arthritis Sufferer

By *NY Pain MD*

***NY Pain MD* is a medical clinic with locations in Midtown NYC and Uptown NYC that has treated thousands of knee arthritis and joint pain patients.**

Here is what every knee arthritis sufferer should know about the best treatments and options available today. Including when and why you should consider each of these 2 treatment approaches to get maximum results.

If you suffer with knee or other join arthritis pain, you have probably already tried many treatments ... especially countless pain medications. Experienced doctors understand that, even though pain medications such as anti-inflammatory pain pills are part of the recommended early treatment plan for knee arthritis pain... they are rarely the answer over the longer term.

In most cases they have minimal results (if any) and have a laundry list of potential side effects. Some being serious and even life threatening.

Are There Any Better Options?

Thankfully, advancements in science and technology come extremely fast. And now there are two very good options for knee arthritis to help relieve the pain.

Two options that a lot of knee arthritis sufferers have never heard of.

Before we get into the two treatments, please understand this...

NY Pain MD is a well established medical clinic that has treated thousands of knee arthritis sufferers and joint and back pain sufferers. Patients travel from all over the area and even several states away from NYC to be treated at one of their clinics because they want the best medical treatments available. What you are about to discover are two REAL medical treatments. Not miracle cures you see on infomercials or non-medical treatments promoted on the internet.

Know this fact: There is no cure for arthritis. But there are these two treatments that have already helped thousands of knee arthritis sufferers - possibly just like you.

The first treatment is more common than the second. Even if you have heard of this treatment - or even tried it without good results - please read this. You will find out why it may not have worked for you and how you may be able to get much better results.

#1 Viscosupplementation

Viscosupplementation has gained quite a bit of popularity in recent years and it has gotten mixed results for a couple of reasons.

But before we get into that,here's what you need to know about viscosupplementation.

When you have arthritis, you suffer a decrease in the lubrication fluids in your knees.

In other words, your knee joints basically "dries up."

The lubricating fluid that decreases is called "synovial fluid." pharmaceutical companies (with the help of doctors) can now make ***natural*** synovial fluid gel-like compounds that, during viscosupplementation treatments. Doctors can precisely introduce directly into the knee and other joints.

This helps replace the lubricating fluid to the knee joint - allowing it to move more freely and smoothly and often decreasing or even eliminating the pain.

What Results Can Be Expected?

Like all medical treatments, the results vary and can not be predicted. But many knee arthritis sufferers get dramatic results. It is not uncommon for patients to either postpone knee replacement surgery for years... or even permanently cancel it.

But There Is A BIG Problem

The key is the treatment must be EXTREMELY PRECISE. If the procedure is slightly off, the medication will not get into the knee joint and the treatment will not work.

That's why the experts at ***NY Pain MD*** use Precision Arthritis Targeting Technology so they can actually see the lubricant going directly into the knee joint during the treatment.

Research shows that doctors performing joint injections without this technology can miss the joint as much as 30% of the time.

If you have tried viscosupplementation without this imaging technology without good results - this may be why.

That's why ***NY Pain MD*** takes it even one step further. They do not just use one step process of advanced imaging during treatment - they use two in their "double confirmation" process. This is to ensure patients get the best possible results.

Another Important Factor

Viscosupplementation medications also come in several different "brands" and chemical make-ups. Just like all medications, some people respond better to one than another. So, the experts at ***NY Pain MD*** use several and great effort is taken to figure out what is the best one for YOU.

One last thing: The experts at ***NY Pain MD*** have found that earlier you start Viscosupplementation the better.

This is most likely because the longer you wait - the more joint destruction takes place.

That's why ***NY Pain MD*** is now seeing so many patients as young as 35 to 40.

Summary: If you have knee arthritis pain and have not tried. Viscosupplementation you should look into it as soon as possible.

If you have tried it without good results. you may still be able to get great results with the proper imaging and specific medication.

What Should You Do If Viscosupplementation Fails?

When conservative treatment, including viscosupplementation fails ... most knee arthritis sufferers believe their only option is total knee replacement surgery.

This is not true...and here is why

There is another treatment for serious knee arthritis pain most people (and even doctors) do not know about.

#2: Radiofrequency Treatment

This treatment is technically called, "Radiofrequency Neurotomy." Or RF for short.

RF is a procedure that is based the theory that blocking the nerve supply to the painful area may alleviate pain and restore function.

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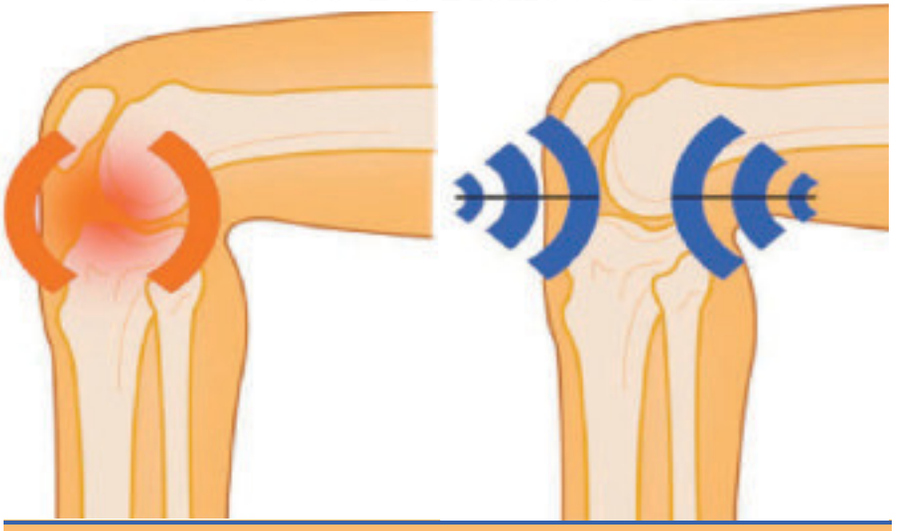
Knee Arthritis Sufferers Successful Treatments?

Needs To Know - Before Or After Knee Replacement Surgery

Advanced Treatment Uses Medical Radio Frequencies Waves To Relieve Pain



Science rescues knee arthritis sufferers?: **Radio Frequency Waves are used to block the nerve supply to the painful area and may alleviate pain and restore function to many. Many patients still in pain after a knee replacement may respond very well to these treatments allowing the possibility of avoiding additional surgery.**

Several branches of nerves that surround the knee are known as "genicular nerves."

Radiofrequency waves are delivered to the genicular nerves under advanced imaging to "block" the nerve from transmitting pain signals.

There are two distinct parts to this treatment. First, a test, diagnostic "G Block" procedure is done to determine if the procedure is going to decrease pain and improve function.

If this first "test" procedure is successful, then one to two weeks later, Radio Frequency waves are applied for term relief.

Is It Safe?

Research has shown this to provided significant relief for some patients. to procedure to be safe and effective.

One study published November 4, 2010 in the journal Pain found that RF treated subjects on average "achieved at least 50% knee pain relief at 1,4 and 12 weeks, respectively. No patient reported a post procedure adverse event during the follow-up period.

Some studies indiciate some patients may get years of relief in some cases. "RF neurotomy (radio frequency treatment) of genicular nerves leads to significant pain reduction and functional improvement in a subset of elderly chronic knee osteoarthritis pain, and thus may be an effective treatment in such cases."

It should also be mentioned that, like all procedures, results will vary patient to patient

Who Should Try This Treatment?

RF should be considered after other treatments, such as anti-inflammatory pain medication and viscosupplementation do not offer good enough results.

RF can be utilized before resorting to total knee replacement. RF allows many patients to avoid knee replacement surgery.

RF has also been found effective AFTER knee replacement surgery when the patient still feels pain.

The pain after a failed knee replacement surgery can be debilitating and this procedure can be the only thing that helps and give you relief.

What To Do Next If You Are In Pain

Here is the "X" factor many do not consider that might be the difference between you getting the best possible treatment or not.

Many experts suggest choosing a medical clinic that offers all these treatments and has the proper, most advanced technology all under one roof.

This way, the doctors working on your case can give you a proper examination and advise the best possible treatment plan for your individual case.

Several experts work as a team to offer you the best treatment options at the appropriate time to maximize results. It is also very convenient to have all your doctors and treatments in one place. Traveling to different offices can be time consuming and even more expensive.

NY Pain MD believes this "X" factor is one of the reasons so many knee arthritis sufferers travel from all over to be treated at their advanced medical clinics.

NY Pain MD offers a limited number of complimentary knee arthritis treatment screenings every month. These screenings are a way for knee arthritis sufferers to get some of their ques-tions answered and see if they are a candidate for one of the cutting-edge treatments offered at ***NY Pain MD***

If you would like a complimentary screening, just call 855-456-PAIN [7246] and tell the scheduling coordinator "I would like a complimentary knee arthritis screening." The screenings fill up fast every month. If you do not call in time to get one this month, the scheduling coordiantators will get you appointed for next month

This screening is no cost and no obligation. Many of the treatments offered are covered by many insurance plans and Medicare

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Syrian soldiers stand guard as Syrians visit the Aleppo Citadel. LOUAI BESHARA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Syrian militias see more US support for ISIS fight

The SDF is now equipped and ready to take back Raqqa.

The U.S.-led coalition against Islamic State has boosted support for its Syrian allies since President Donald Trump took office, supplying armored vehicles for the first time as they prepare to launch a new phase in their campaign for Raqqa, a spokesman for the militia said on Tuesday.

The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance, which is dominated by the Kurdish YPG militia, is waging a campaign aimed at taking Raqqa city, Islamic State's base of operations in Syria.

A Pentagon spokesman said on Tuesday the vehicles had been supplied to Arab elements within the SDF "as part of our existing authorities to enable them," and there had been no change in policy.

But the SDF spokesman told Reuters their delivery marked a significant improvement in Washington's support and attributed the change to the new administration, which says eradicating Islamic State will be one of its biggest priorities.

The SDF is likely to figure prominently in Trump's strategy for fighting IS in Syria, where the jihadist group still holds large areas of territory stretching to the Iraqi border.

The YPG is the most powerful element of the SDF, and its growing sway in northern Syria is a major source of concern for the Turkish government, which is worried this will fuel instability among its own Kurdish minority.

A Kurdish military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters the next phase of the Raqqa campaign would aim to seal off all remaining roads to the city, including the route to Deir al-Zor province, another IS stronghold.

SDF spokesman Talal Silo said the U.S.-led coalition had delivered the armored vehicles in the last four or five days. He declined to give the number of vehicles supplied.

"Previously we didn't get support in this form, we would get light weapons and ammunition," he said. "There are signs of full support from the new American leadership — more than before — for our forces."

The Pentagon spokesman said the vehicles were supplied to the Syrian Arab Coalition — part of the SDF — and would help it contend with the threat posed by improvised explosive devices used by Islamic State as they advance toward Raqqa.

"The Department of Defense only provides training and materiel support to the Syrian Arab Coalition," Major Adrian J.T. Rankine-Galloway said in a statement.

Euphrates Dam still in Islamic State hands

The U.S. strategy toward fighting Islamic State in Syria has generated tension with Turkey, which views the YPG as an extension of the PKK, a group that has waged a three-decade insurgency in Turkey.

The YPG forms the military backbone of autonomous regions set up by Kurdish groups and their allies in northern Syria since the onset of the war in 2011.

Trump, who pledged in his inaugural address to eradicate Islamic State and like-minded groups "from the face of the Earth", signed an executive order on Saturday asking the Pentagon, the joint chiefs of staff and other agencies to submit a preliminary plan on how to proceed within 30 days.

Islamic State is being fought in Syria by three sets of enemies: the Syrian Democratic Forces in northern Syria, the Syrian government and its Russian and Iranian-backed militia allies in central and eastern Syria, and the Turkish army and its Syrian rebel allies in a strip of land near the border.

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New FCC chair vows to shrink regulations

His top priority is to "remove unnecessary or counterproductive regulations from the books."

The new Republican chairman of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission, Ajit Pai, vowed to pare back outdated commission regulations, but declined to say if he will move quickly to overturn the Obama administration's landmark net neutrality rules.

One top priority is "to remove unnecessary or counterproductive regulations from the books," Pai told reporters Tuesday after he chaired his first meeting. "We want to make sure that our regulations match the realities of the modern marketplace."

Pai, who was tapped by President Donald Trump this month to run the FCC, in December vowed to take a "weed whacker" to unnecessary FCC rules. He opposed many rules imposed by the Obama administration, including net neutrality, broadband privacy and media ownership limits.

The net neutrality rules bar internet access protections from slowing consumer access to web content. Internet providers fear net neutrality rules make it harder to manage internet traffic and make investment in additional capacity less likely. The Republican-controlled Congress is also considering rewriting the net neutrality rules.

Pai opposed the Obama administration's 2015 net neutrality rules that reclassified broadband providers and treated them like a public utility. He said Tuesday he supports a "free and open internet" but opposes the reclassification.

In December, Pai told some small broadband providers in a letter that it would not enforce the "enhanced transparency" rules. He declined to say if he is considering not enforcing net neutrality rules for all companies even if they remain on the books.

"We haven't made any determinations," Pai said.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Commissioner Ajit Pai. NICHOLAS KAMM/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The FCC on Tuesday voted to abolish a requirement that cable systems, commercial TV and radio broadcasters retain some public inspection files.

On Friday, Pai withdrew proposed reforms of the $45 billion business data services market and $20 billion pay TV set top box market. He declined to say if he will formally close any pending dockets.

"We want to make sure that our regulations match the realities of the modern marketplace."
Ajit Pai

A number of cable and wireless trade associations on Friday asked the FCC to put new broadband privacy rules on hold while the Republican-controlled FCC considers whether to scrap the rules.

Pai declined to say if thought the AT&T Inc. Time Warner Inc. merger should be subject to FCC review. The companies said this month they only expect a review by the U.S. Justice Department. REUTERS

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Big Mac ATM dispenses free burgers to hungry crowds in Boston

Dozens of starving customers stretched down the block, and they were lovin' it.

ERIN TIERNAN
@MetroNewYork
erin.tiernan@metro.us

Scott Norris of Malden, Massachusetts, is overwhelmed with joy as he eats his Grand Mac. DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN/METRO

As Scott Norris sunk his teeth into a burger fresh out of the McDonald's Big Mac ATM, there was only one way to describe the experience.

"God bless America," he said.

Norris, of Malden, Massachusetts, was second in line for the Big Mac ATM that debuted Tuesday in Boston's Kenmore Square.

As the name suggests, it is a freestanding machine that dispenses Big Macs, devoid of any human interaction.

The ATM, which was tucked behind red velvet ropes, drew a long line that snaked down the sidewalk as dozens of hungry customers waited for their chance to be a part of the burger innovation.

The burgers were free but it was a one-day event only. The ATM was open from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. No word yet on a future rollout.

There were three varieties of Big Macs to choose from: the junior, original and the all-new Grand Mac. While customers ordered via the screen, McDonald's workers kept supplies stocked on the back end.

Stephen Hui, a 19-year-old Boston University student from Tyngsborough, went for the Grand Mac. Why? Because it's bigger.

> *"It was lunch time and I was, like, I'm broke, they're giving out free Big Macs. Hell yeah."*
> Simon Mariano

This beefed up, if you will, version of the classic Big Mac — two all-beef patties, the famed special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles and onions on a sesame seed bun — boasts more beef, bigger buns and more cheese.

Hui said he was impressed with the size of the burger, but said he couldn't compare it to the original.

"As a matter of fact, I haven't had a Big Mac," he said. A Big Mac novice no more.

And Hui wasn't alone. Only 20 percent of millennials have tried the signature burger, according to an internal McDonald's memo leaked last year.

But in Boston at least, the Big Mac ATM seemed to bring in younger audiences, as college and high school students followed the smell of free food.

"It was lunch time and I was, like, I'm broke, they're giving out free Big Macs. Hell yeah," Simon Mariano, 16, of Boston said.

The only drawback of the Big Mac ATM experience? You can't have fries with that.

Derek Kouyoumjian contributed to this report.

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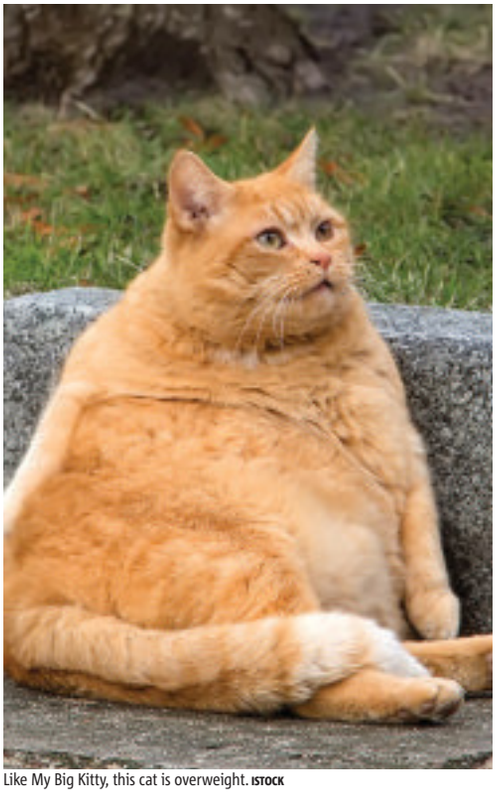
Your pet is obese, but you pay the price



Like My Big Kitty, this cat is overweight. ISTOCK

Diabetes treatment alone averages around $1,000.

Keezley, a 5-year-old Samoyed dog, is always searching for food in her house — stealing loaves of bread off counters and even getting into her cat sibling's litter box.

Keezley's habits have added 20 pounds to her 50-pound frame, and serious weight to owner Susi Sweeny's wallet.

Even just 10 pounds overweight would have put Keezley at risk for joint issues and diabetes, which are costly to treat because they require frequent vet visits, medications, special diets and exercise regimes. Treatment for diabetes averaged $1,000 per claim in 2015, according to Adam Dell, spokesperson for Nationwide pet insurance.

That is a fraction of the cost of the 1.3 million obesity-related claims that Nationwide pet insurance processed in 2015, and an even smaller fraction of overall costs in the United States, considering the entire pet insurance industry and the millions of pets with no insurance.

The easiest way for pet owners to avoid the costs of complications from obesity is to keep their furry friends from becoming overweight. What owners can do varies greatly between dogs and cats, and so do the costs.

The cat diet

For felines, restricting calories without veterinary supervision can send them into liver failure, said Dr. Carol McConnell, chief veterinary medical officer for Nationwide. This is because cat ancestors were solitary hunters for insects, mice and other small animal prey and their systems were designed to eat constantly.

So cat owner Jeanne Gregory has tried just about everything to get her 40-pound Maine Coon Tabby, named My Big Kitty, to exercise. The cat did not take to chasing a laser, instead lying on the floor and swatting the light with her paw. Walks failed, too, because My Big Kitty did not take well to being on a leash.

Now, Gregory is trying a $3 cat toy her vet recommended that she can stuff with dry cat food. It can take 45 minutes of moving the ball around for all the kibble to pop out. Also, since the cat follows her around her condo, Gregory is walking around the house a lot more.

A dog's busy life

You can restrict calories for your dog without anything severe happening to your dog, said McConnell. Dog ancestors hunted in packs for large animal prey and then feasted together, and they went a long time in the wild between meals.

Sounds like a cost savings, but pet owners may end up spending more because cutting calories is not always just a matter of giving a dog less food.

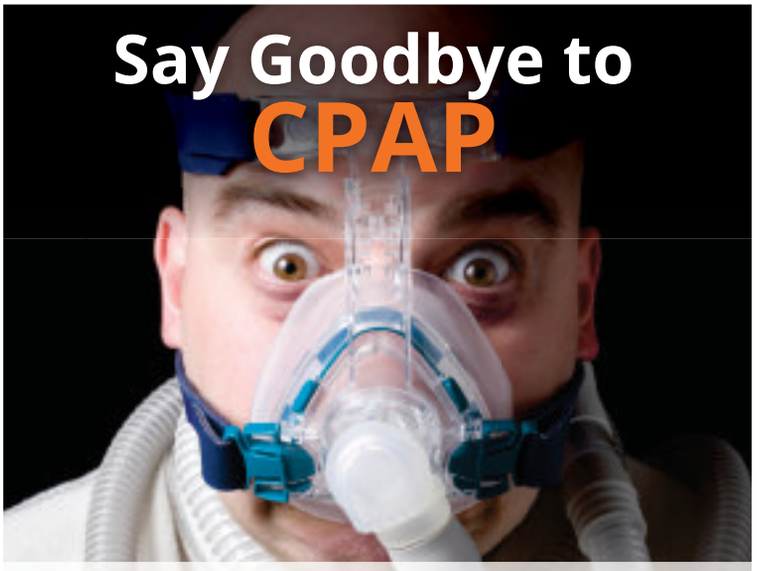
To solve hunger issues, many owners choose specialty dog foods that are high in fiber, said Dr. Jennifer Larsen, associate professor of clinical nutrition at the University of California, Davis Veterinary Teaching Hospital. They cost at least double the price of standard dog foods.

Diet food is also available at veterinarian offices, and administered under the vet's care to avoid any complications. This also adds up.

Increasing exercise can also carry a price tag. Obese dogs may have arthritis and other painful health issues that need to be treated, said McConnell, resulting in more vet visits and medication.

The author is a Reuters contributor. The opinions expressed are his/her own.

REYNA GOBEL/REUTERS



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Cockfighters reap Year of Rooster bonus in Thailand

Prized birds faced off in front of thousands of spectators at a stadium near Thailand's capital on Sunday as celebrations for the Year of the Rooster brought a windfall for some.

Although cockfighting is banned in many countries on grounds of animal cruelty, it is a lucrative business in Thailand as well as a popular pastime. Sunday's top bird sold for over $70,000.

"This year is a very good year for us. It's the year of the golden rooster. The value of the roosters has gone up," said Banchej Changyai, 55, who was running the contest south of Bangkok on the second day of celebrations for the Lunar New Year.

Each fight involves two roosters facing off in a pit. They lurch at each, inflicting damage with beaks and wings.

Each round is 22 minutes long, and there can be up to six rounds depending on the roosters' endurance.

Cockfighting in Thailand GETTY IMAGES

"Today, the rooster brought me a lot of money. I love cockfighting, it's a hobby of mine," said Narongsak Sealee, 22, after winning 500,000 baht ($14,170) at the Thedthai cockfighting stadium in Samut Prakan province.

Unlike in many countries, the Thai cocks do not fight to the death. Instead, the first bird to cower away loses.

"This rooster is so good that it gives me, the owner, a great reputation and makes me very happy," said Virat Patcharaphangkorn, after buying the event's prize rooster for 2.5 million baht ($70,840). REUTERS

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Oprah to make her grand return to television

Finally, some good news.

This fall, Oprah will be making the comeback of a lifetime: She'll be joining "60 Minutes" as a special correspondent. According to Vulture, she'll be filing stories that facilitate real conversations between people from different backgrounds.

"I'm so excited and proud to join forces with this historic news program, which for me represents the bastion of journalistic storytelling," Winfrey said in a statement. "At a time when people are so divided, my intention is to bring relevant insight and perspective." You gotta admit— the woman has impeccable timing.

No word yet on whether or not those interviews will be tearful and full of emotions, but a girl can dream.

Dr. Luke continues his war against Kesha

Kesha is still hashing out her legal battle with Dr. Luke, and things have taken a turn for the worse — again. And it's all over … a text message?

That's right. The producer and creep, aka Lukasz Gottwald, is claiming that a text exchange between Kesha and Lady Gaga is part of a grand defamation scheme against him. He believes Kesha has taken on "a malicious campaign to destroy [his] reputation and career," according to Buzzfeed. The text message made no mention of Dr. Luke by name, but did state that another recording artist had been "raped by the same man."

This is such tragic news for Kesha, who, by the way, has had both her reputation and career completely decimated by this man. Dr. Luke still refuses to release Kesha from her contract, and still refuses to release any of her new music, keeping her in a dreadful state of limbo. Going so low as to use a private text message exchange as evidence of a defamation scheme is shameful. Also — disgusting.

Enough, my dude. Grow up, own up.

Chrissy Teigen claps back on Twitter about IVF struggles

One of the small pleasures I take in life is watching Chrissy Teigen handle trolls with aplomb. The woman has a true talent. So it should come as no surprise she handily let a Twitter user know about herself. The very frank model opened up about having another baby with John Legend: And this time, it's going to be a boy.

Teigen has been very open about her fertility issues, and her experience with IVF after having trouble conceiving — which, honestly, is super refreshing. But then, a woman named Linda jumped in Teigen's mentions. Poor Linda, who doesn't know a thing. Linda, a teacher from Florida, who is probably out of her mind, suggested that Teigen "give it a minute to try naturally," and accused her of "avoiding 'the act,'" which, OK, girl.

The "Lip Sync Battle" commentator wrote back:

Teigen suffers no fools.

the word

RACHAEL CLEMMONS

Pharrell Williams and his wife welcome triplets

Oh, man: Pharrell Williams definitely knows what it means to "Get Lucky."

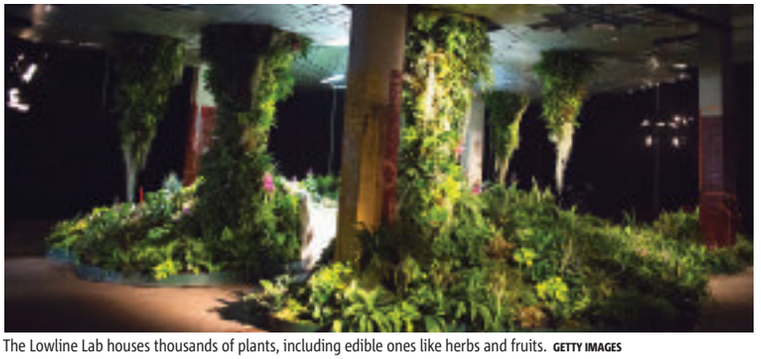
According to Vanity Fair, the singer/"Hidden Figures" producer/jack-of-all-the-damn-trades welcomed triplets — TRIPLETS — with his wife, Helen Lasichanh, early in January.

Back in September, Pharrell's rep confirmed the couple was expecting their second child, but I mean, nobody said anything about the third or fourth! They already have one son, Rocket Man Williams (I can't), age 8.

Congratulations, you guys! Also, good luck.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

World's first underground park is closing



The Lowline Lab houses thousands of plants, including edible ones like herbs and fruits. GETTY IMAGES

The park's environmental education programs will be carried on by community partners. LOWER EAST SIDE PARTNERSHIP

The Lowline Lab created an oasis beneath Essex Street, but you only have a month left to see it.

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
eva.kis@metro.us

Underneath Essex Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side, an experiment in the future of urban development has flourished. But at the end of February, it'll come to an end.

"The Lab was only meant to be a short-term scientific experiment," says Dan Barasch, co-founder and executive director of the Lowline Lab.

The world's first underground park, which opened in October 2015 after a successful Kickstarter campaign, has offered an urban oasis for visitors while giving researchers unprecedented data on channeling sunlight underground to create green space where no one had thought it could exist before.

The project — the first phase of a larger plan to build a permanent underground park — was only supposed to last six months, but intense public interest (more than 100,000 visitors to date) allowed Barasch and his collaborators to extend their lease. The site is one of nine that will become a massive new mixed-use development called Essex Crossing.

The park's last day will be Feb. 26; until then, you can visit the lab — admission is free — on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Two special upcoming events include a science fair on Feb. 11 with "a wide range of organizations, companies and speakers who are doing something really compelling with science for social good," says Barasch. And on Feb. 12, the park will host Winter Daylife, a pop-up with food vendors from nearby Essex Street Market, which will relocate to Essex Crossing.

Besides being an oasis in a neighborhood without much greenery, the Lowline Lab has hosted art, wellness, social and educational events, and the team is looking at ways to re-establish a public facility to continue them.

The Lab houses thousands of plants, from mosses to herbs like mint and even pineapples. "We grew strawberries in the middle of winter," says Barasch of what surprised him the most. Both the amount of sunlight they've been able to harness and variety of thriving plants exceeded the team's expectations.

"The Lowline now moves into a different phase, which is an even more exciting phase. In some ways, our research is only going to be scaling up from here."

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Léon is definitely not tired of talking

The new Swedish sing-songwriter with the hit of summer 2016 is just winding up

A.D. AMOROSI
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letters@metro.us

ALL IMAGES BY CATIE LAFFOON

When Sweden's Léon posted "Tired of Talking" to Soundcloud last summer, the singer-songwriter didn't know it would strike a nerve with empowered-female crowds. It was the first track she worked on with producing partner Agrin Rahmani and that contagiously melodic tune won the immediate attention of Columbia Records, which swooped-in and signed them.

Now, eight months and three more singles — "Nobody Cares," "Liar" and the new "Sleep Deprived" — later, Léon is a buzzworthy artist. Her debut album is due shortly, and she and Rahmani gear up for their first huge tour that brings them to the East Coast this week. Léon phoned from Stockholm on a breezy Friday evening to discuss all of the above.

You've been writing songs since childhood and playing cello, and your folks come from the classical world as instrumentalists and composers. Did they absolutely shriek when you expressed an interest in pop?

Well, I played the cello, as well as my mom, and I wrote songs in all genres growing up, so there was this tear between the classical world and pop. I think they got used to me listening and loving soul music then singing in classical choirs and such. It wasn't as though my going pop came up overnight. Plus, I think they thought it was fun.

It probably can't hurt that you're making money at making pop?

Well ... [laughs] that's the goal. And my mom has played cello on some of my songs. My uncle too.

You went to school for pop music writing and production in Sweden, which I can't help but think must have included ABBA and Max Martin in the syllabus. Was that cool?

It was. [The courses were] more of a post-high school set of classes than a college curriculum. I already had a sound, which was this soul-jazz thing, so I went to learn about the business, the studio and the art of collaboration.

And you met your producing partner there. What did you guys like about each other?

There were like, 30 people in our classes, and we had as much similar about us as we had different. I was about jazz and soul with a classical background. He has an indie background.

We actually got put together by a teacher for a project. The songs that we have now were some we wrote in those classes. That's funny to think about. "Liar" and "Tired of Talking" are both two years old this month.

Do you pay attention to women protesting Donald Trump and his anti-feminist, anti-abortion politics? Your work is very self-possessed when it comes to displaying a woman's strength, and your songs are very much like anthems to this movement.

I am very aware of the woman's movement in America, and throughout the globe. It's natural to be a feminist in Sweden and we don't take equality for granted. It's great that people are taking a stand, but no one had to tell me to be feminist. Whether you're black, white, gay, straight — equality should be a given.

So are you allowed to say where you are with the album, its title, the way the rest of the tunes sound?

I was done with it, but then suddenly, I wasn't. I can't say much obviously, but I am beyond excited. Honestly, I hate being secretive as you know form my songs, but it's not just about me anymore.

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Why James Baldwin still matters

Raoul Peck, maker of the Oscar-nominated doc "I Am Not Your Negro," talks about the legendary writer.

MATT PRIGGE
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James Baldwin, center right, with sunglasses, is the subject of Raoul Peck's documentary essay-film "I Am Not Your Negro," in theaters on Friday and currently nominated for an Oscar. DAN BUDNIK/ MAGNOLIA PICTURES

Raoul Peck is happy James Baldwin is back in the news. With the rise of Black Lives Matter came frank talk about race. That talk has often been peppered with Baldwin quotes. In works like his novel "Go Tell it on the Mountain" and his essay book "The Fire Next Time," the legendary writer proved himself one of the most insightful, passionate and articulate commentators of the civil rights era. And alas, his words still ring true.

"When you read Baldwin, you feel like underlining everything," Peck tells us. Many of those underlined passages wind up in the filmmaker's new, presently Oscar-nominated documentary "I Am Not Your Negro," a film essay that's no mere Baldwin primer. Instead it uses his words to construct an argument, linking the fight for equality in the 1960s with the racism that still exists today.

GETTY IMAGES

It also helps bring Baldwin even further back into the limelight.

"He's underknown and underrespected in this country," Peck says. "People don't know about his eloquence, about his ability to convince people. He had very sharp eyes when it came to this country; he saw through everything. And he wrote about it in a way that was intelligent, funny, poetic, humanistic. People can be angry, but not the way Baldwin was," he adds.

Baldwin was born in Harlem in 1924. He emigrated to Paris in 1948, where he lived until the 1950s, when he realized he was needed back in the States. During the civil rights era, he was friends with Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. But he eked out his own position on race relations, often appearing on television to argue his case with disarming calm and charm.

"I Am Not Your Negro" is littered with some of these TV appearances. When he's not on screen, his words are read, quietly, by Samuel L. Jackson. During these passages, one admires not only his clarity but his artistry.

"He's a major writer. Not a major black writer; he's a major writer," Peck argues. "He really invented a language. People like Toni Morrison are totally in debt to him. A lot of eminent white writers also say Baldwin was someone who helped them become writers."

Peck thinks we need to return to Baldwin, to help us with today: "The importance of Baldwin is he brings you back to the fundamentals — what is not solved, what will come up again and again."

Things haven't changed

Peck thinks there are many reasons for Baldwin's re-emergence in the cultural discourse.

"A lot of things have changed. But fundamentally there's not been a huge change," Peck charges. "Some [people] will easily forget that there are a huge majority of black people who are still in danger, who still don't get the schooling they need or the homes they need or the jobs they need."

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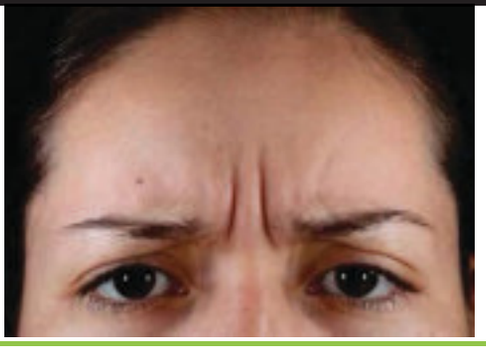

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home

Missoni Amos GETTY

Margherita Missoni bring sunshine to Pottery Barn Kids

The Italian designer and ultrachic mom just launched a collection for the home retailer.

TINA CHADHA
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$199

You might recognize Margherita Missoni Amos from high-society pages of fashion magazines, where the heiress to Italian brand Missoni is often featured in photos from fabulous parties, clad in her family's iconic zigzag knits.

But design is in her blood, and after having two sons, Otto and Augusto, with husband Eugenio Amos, she launched a childrenswear line, Margherita Kids, in 2015. Now, Missoni Amos is branching out into kids' furnishings, with a home line for Pottery Barn Kids.

The 50-piece capsule collection, which debuted last week, includes sunny, whimsical decor for the nursery, bedroom and playroom.

"My home, including the nurseries for my two young boys, definitely incorporates my mix-and-match style," says the Italian-based designer. "I love to play with color, print and texture."

Her bohemian aesthetic is evident throughout the line: Free-spirited daisies are a main motif decorating poufs, mirrors and sheets ("Margherita" means "daisy" in Italian, and the flower is a signature in her children's clothing collection); pillows are embroidered with sweet Italian sayings and plush, colorful pompoms cover quilts.

$39

"I love pairing classic and timeless items with things that are a bit more playful," she says. "It's important for your home to be a reflection of your own personal taste."

Below, Missoni Amos takes us through more of her favorites.

1 What are some trends in kids' furniture you're loving?

As a parent, I now understand how important it is to have a comfy armchair in a child's bedroom. Inevitably, you'll use it a lot — for middle-of-the-night calls, reading to your little one and cuddling before bedtime. I wouldn't necessarily call this a "trend," but I'm a huge proponent of incorporating child-size furniture into kids' rooms such, as the Daisy Chair and Floral Printed Anywhere Chair. I strongly believe that it's important for children to be surrounded by furniture that's both approachable and size-appropriate.

2 What are some mom blogs/sites you read?

Some of my favorites are Grace-Magazine, Not So Mumsy and Jet Set Mama.

3 Where did you look for inspiration?

I wanted to create a line of home furnishings that would inspire and empower kids to be imaginative and inventive. The collection is also joyful and whimsical and I think both parents and children alike will love the designs.

4 What are the must-have items for a kid's room?

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I recommend a durable rug (spills happen!) and ample storage baskets for the inevitable accumulation of toys!

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					5 people	$31,817 - $58,740
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	1 bedroom	$882	21	➡	1 person	$32,194 - $38,100
					2 people	$32,194 - $43,500
					3 people	$32,194 - $48,960
	2 bedroom	$1,065	9	➡	2 people	$38,503 - $43,500
					3 people	$38,503 - $48,960
					4 people	$38,503 - $54,360
					5 people	$38,503 - $58,740
	4 bedroom	$1,371	4	➡	4 people	$49,680 - $54,360
					5 people	$49,680 - $58,740
					6 people	$49,680 - $63,060
					7 people	$49,680 - $67,440
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					9 people	$49,680 - $76,104

[1] Rent includes gas for cooking.
[2] Household size includes everyone who will live with you, including parents and children. Subject to occupancy criteria.
[3] Household earnings includes salary, hourly wages, tips, Social Security, child support, and other income. Income guidelines subject to change.
[4] Minimum income listed may not apply to applicants with Section 8 or other qualifying rental subsidies. Asset limits also apply.

How Do You Apply?

Apply online or through mail. To apply online, please go to **nyc.gov/housingconnect**. To request an application **by mail, send a self-addressed envelope to: Dorie Miller Apartments, 87-14 116th Street Richmond Hill, NY 11418.** Only send one application per development. Do not submit duplicate applications. Do not apply online and also send in a paper application. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than March 31, 2017 late applications will not be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application?

After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility. Interviews are usually scheduled from 2 to 10 months after the application deadline. You will be asked to bring documents that verify your household size, identity of members of your household, and your household income.

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Politics trumps the NFL in TV ratings

The true test on whether or not the NFL's ratings are in decline will come this Sunday.

MATT BURKE
@burke_metro
matthew.burke@metro.us

Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton were a better TV draw than Aaron Rodgers and Eli Manning this past fall. GETTY IMAGES

The NFL has touted itself as the only bulletproof TV product in the U.S. for years now. While live TV ratings for traditional shows continue to dip across the board (due mainly to on demand content, online streaming and an oversaturation of channels), the NFL was thought to be recession-proof. That was until politics became more cut-throat and more bloody than anything you'll see on an NFL Sunday.

"The NFL's ratings were so far down," then-President-elect Donald Trump said at an early December rally in Cincinnati. "And you know what the reason was? Because this business is tougher than the NFL. Their ratings were down 20, 21 percent, and it was because of us."

Trump's football ratings bashing did have merit as — according to Sports Illustrated — CBS' regional NFL coverage was down 9 percent, Thursday Night Football was down 18 percent, "Sunday Night Football" was down 19 percent and "Monday Night Football" was down 24 percent from early September to late-October. Not coincidentally, that time period was the heart of the U.S. Presidential election cycle, and 2016 was CNN's most successful year ever, as its ratings jumped 76 percent from the previous year.

The first two presidential debates between Trump and Hillary Clinton drew a combined 37.2 rating (the first debate drew an unprecedented 84 million views), according to Forbes. A key Week 5 matchup between two marquee NFL franchises — the New York Giants and Green Bay Packers — earned just a 10.2 rating when it went head-to-head with the second debate. Three days before Election Day, Denver and Oakland drew just a 10.4 rating (18.3 million viewers) on Sunday night and in the first post-election Sunday night game, the Patriots and Seahawks drew a 12.7 rating (22 million viewers), according to Sportsmediawatch.com.

Ratings went up across the board for the NFL in December, a time in which Trump was often radio silent, but political news picked up again to start the new year (President Barack Obama bidding farewell, Trump's cabinet picks, Trump's inauguration, political protests), and it would go head-to-head with the NFL playoffs. Again, football lost the battle. Only two of the 10 NFL playoff games this year scored a better rating than the previous year (according to Sportsmediawatch.com).

Super Bowl ratings have remained steady this decade, as the NFL typically gets around a 70 percent share of U.S. TV viewership on Super Sunday, with a 46.0 rating being the norm in the past few years. The Super Bowl between the Patriots and the Seahawks two years ago was the most-watched show in U.S. TV history with an audience of 112.2 million (47.5 rating). Last year's Super Bowl between the Broncos and Panthers saw a tiny dip in ratings, drawing 111.9 million viewers.

The NFL is surely hoping the return of the Patriots on the league's grandest stage will help the sagging numbers, but with the unheralded Atlanta Falcons as the other participant, it's a strong bet that this Sunday's game won't set any ratings records.

Trump and football

- President Trump will continue at least one presidential tradition as he will be the subject of a sit-down interview during the Super Bowl pregame show. Fox, which is broadcasting this year's Super Bowl, will have Bill O'Reilly conduct the interview and it will air around 4 p.m. this Sunday.
- Trump once owned a pro football team, the USFL's New Jersey Generals, in the 1980s.
- Trump maintains friendships with Pats owner Robert Kraft, head coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady. He also recently appointed New York Jets owner Woody Johnson to be the U.S. ambassador to Britain.

Hamlett appears to be acting as Red Bulls sporting director

Ali Curtis may still be the New York Red Bulls acting sporting director but it appears that a member of the coaching staff may, in fact, be the point person on some key decisions currently.

In recent weeks, it has been Denis Hamlett, an assistant coach under head coach Jesse Marsch, who has been the face of the Red Bulls personnel department. Two sources, including one general manager of an MLS team, tells Metro that in recent weeks Hamlett has been the one handling inquiries on matters such as trades and player personnel issues.

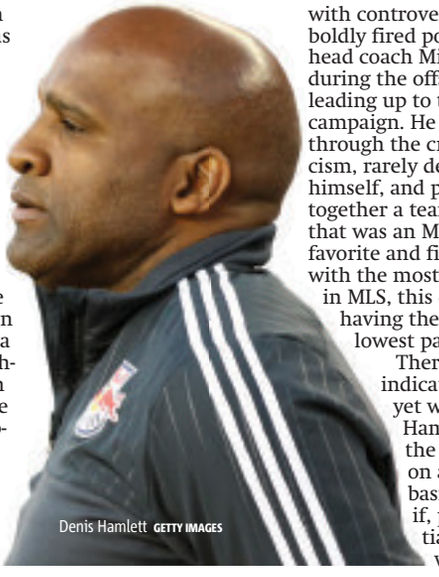
"I've been told to deal with Denis now," the one general manager told Metro. "I have no idea if it is permanent or not, I just don't know. But he's the one."

Several weeks ago, Curtis, who has been the sporting director for the past two highly successful Red Bulls seasons, left the MLS SuperDraft suddenly and returned to New York. The Red Bulls would not say why Curtis left the SuperDraft in Los Angeles so suddenly, this as rumors circulated that Marsch was perhaps leaving for a job with Red Bull Salzburg. Metro, citing league sources, was the first outlet to break the news that Marsch, 2015 MLS Coach of the Year, was not taking a job in Europe and instead was returning to the MLS club.

Now it potentially gets interesting.

One source, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that he's heard through the grapevine that Curtis is currently negotiating a settlement to leave the organization. No reason was given why Curtis, a man who pieced together a team that has won the Eastern Conference titles and took the Supporters Shield in 2015, would suddenly leave.

A former executive in the league office, Curtis' tenure in New York started with controversy as he boldly fired popular head coach Mike Petke during the offseason leading up to the 2015 campaign. He rode through the criticism, rarely defending himself, and pieced together a team in 2015 that was an MLS Cup favorite and finished with the most points in MLS, this despite having the league's lowest payroll.



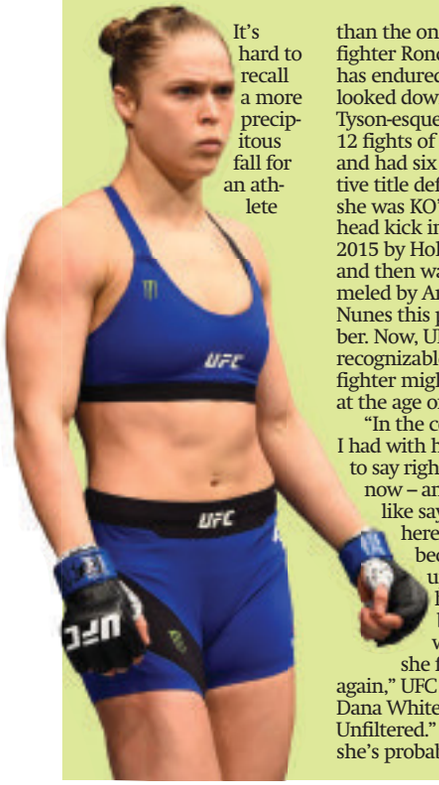
Denis Hamlett GETTY IMAGES

There is no indication yet whether Hamlett has the position on a full-time basis or even if, potentially, he was filling in for Curtis were these rumors of his departure untrue. What is known is that Hamlett right now has taken the role.

Sharp, energetic and affable, Hamlett played one season in MLS in 1996 with the Colorado Rapids before pursuing a career in coaching. He was a former head coach of the Fire as well as Chivas USA. He has a reputation around MLS and soccer circles as someone with an intricate knowledge of the league's personnel and talent.

In 2012 he served as an assistant with the Montreal Impact where Marsch was then the head coach. KRISTIAN DYER

A RONDA RETIREMENT?

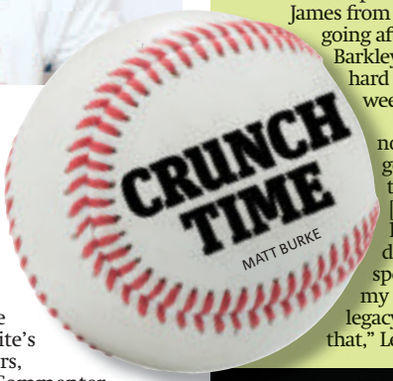


It's hard to recall a more precipitous fall for an athlete than the one UFC fighter Ronda Rousey has endured. Rousey looked downright Tyson-esque in the first 12 fights of her career and had six consecutive title defenses. But she was KO'd via a head kick in November 2015 by Holly Holm and then was pummeled by Amanda Nunes this past December. Now, UFC's most recognizable female fighter might be done at the age of 29.

"In the conversation I had with her, if I had to say right here, right now – and I don't like saying right here, right now because it's up to her, it's her thing – but I wouldn't say she fights again," UFC president Dana White told "UFC Unfiltered." "I think she's probably done."

FREEDOM OF THE PREZ

Barstoolsports.com got their media credentials pulled by the NFL and the popular website won't be allowed to promote itself on Radio Row during Super Bowl week. The NFL likely took these measures because the site's founder, Patriots fan David "El Prez" Portnoy, once organized an anti-Roger Goodell protest at the NFL's offices in New York (he was arrested for it) and the site has been shredding the NFL commish since the beginning of the Deflategate drama. Still, one of the website's writers, PFT Commenter, snuck into Super Bowl opening night and asked Bill Belichick a question. As for Portnoy — in response to his credentials being pulled, he tweeted out Tuesday: "You know who else banned the media who opposed him? Hitler."



BARKLEY VS. LEBRON

Getting into a war of words with Charles Barkley typically ends poorly for the guy not named Charles Barkley. That didn't stop LeBron James from going after Barkley hard this week.

"I'm not going to let [Barkley] disrespect my legacy like that," LeBron said to ESPN after Barkley called him "whiny," among other things, on TNT. "I'm not the one who threw somebody through a window. I never spit on a kid. I never had unpaid debt in Las Vegas."

Damn!

Longtime Barkley-hater and former NBA bad ass Charles Oakley joined in on the Chuck bashing Tuesday.

"I love everything LeBron James said about the hater," Oakley tweeted. "[Barkley] needs to stop drinking at work. TNT, can I stop by and get a drink?"

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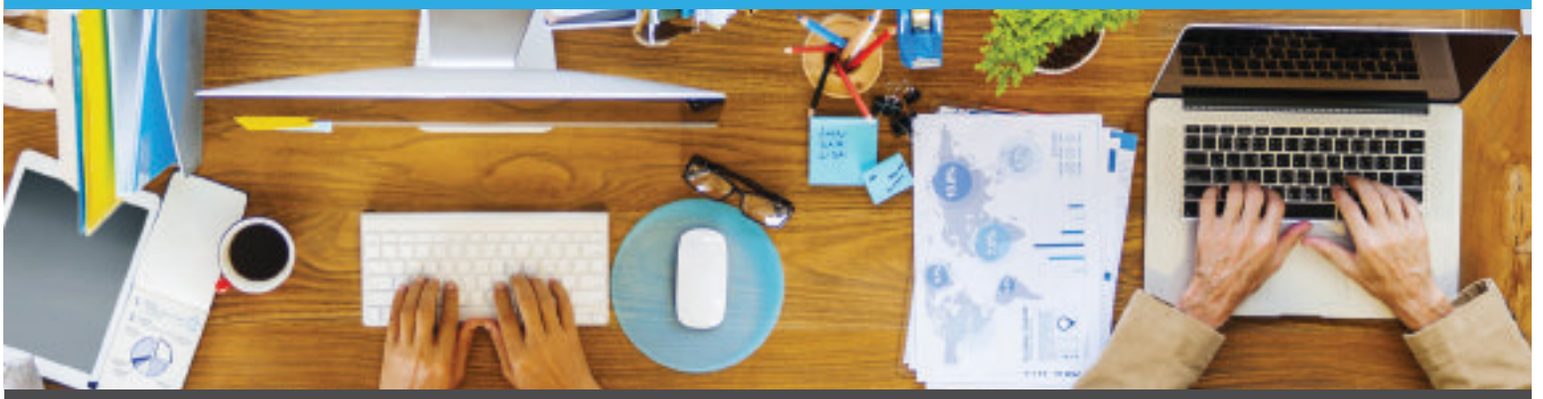

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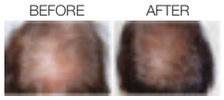
BEFORE AFTER



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NOTICE OF SALE

SUPREME COURT QUEENS COUNTY FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTAGE ASSOCIATION; Plaintiff(s) vs. SUIDASS SAHAI; KRISHNA SAHAI; et al: Defendant(s). Attorney for Plaintiff(s): ROICKI, ROSICKI & ASSOCIATES, P.C., 2 Summit Court, Suite 301, Fishkill, NY 12524, 845.897.1600 Pursuant to judgment of foreclosure and sale granted herein on or about November 29, 2016, I will sell at Public Auction to the highest bidder at on the front steps of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of Queens, located at the QUEENS COUNTY SUPREME COURT, located at 88-11 SUTPHIN BOULEVARD, JAMAICA, NEW YORK IN COURTROOM #25. On February 24, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. Premises known as 129-19 5th Avenue, Richmond Hill, NY 11419 Block: 9445 Lot: 41 ALL that certain plot, piece or parcel of land with buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the 4th Ward of the Borough and County of Queens, City and State of New York, being part of Lots 494 and 495, Block 23, shown and designated on a certain map entitled "Map of Lots at West Jamaica, the Property of F.W. Dunton, surveyed June 1888 by John J. McLaughlin," and filed in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Queens on 6/15/1889 as Map # 300. As more particularly described in the judgment of foreclosure and sale. Sold subject to all the terms and conditions contained in said judgment and terms of sale. Approximate amount of judgment $311,813.36 plus interest and costs. INDEX NO. 6335/07 Thomas R. Purcell, Esq. Referee.

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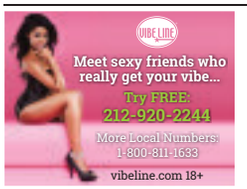

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17 List of typos
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63 2001, to Livy
64 Ms. Fawcett
65 Shriveled from heat
66 Mach 1 exceeder
67 Rendezvous

Down

1 Namath or Pesci
2 Bobby -- of hockey
3 Belg. neighbor
4 Woodsy spaces
5 Legally impede
6 "Dizzy" of baseball
7 Pays homage
8 Noisy fights
9 Tigers, e.g.
10 Giveaway
11 Ocean, in Mongolian
12 Grenoble's river
13 Board game
21 Muppet frog
22 Rustics
23 Alps' Mont --
24 Veranda
25 Lawn tool
29 -- up (in hiding)
30 Play banjo
32 What a --!
33 City neighbor
34 Animal that hisses
35 Gazing at
36 Reuben purveyors
42 Last car on a train
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59 1040 org.
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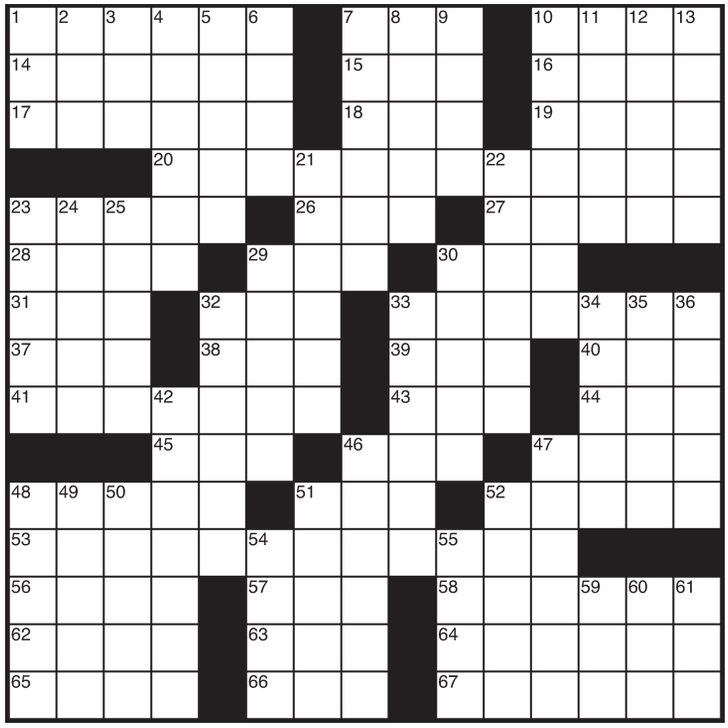

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easy

	7		2	3		4		
5	9					7		
3				7			5	6
		5	6		4			
6				8				1
			5		1	2		
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		4		6	2		1	

hard

4			9					
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	4	8	5				7	
		3		4			6	8
	8	5			3			7
					9			5

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries High energy and an impulsive nature will bring good results if you are disciplined, prepared and organized. Reach for the stars with certainty.

Taurus Your association with a group of interesting people willing to explore similar interests will broaden your outlook and help you discover what you really want to pursue.

Gemini You'll be ready to take on the world. Get active and exert discipline in order to bring about positive change. An opportunity will come to you through old colleagues.

Cancer Don't ignore friends, family or children who need your help. Be resourceful and offer solutions, but don't do the work for someone who has made a mistake.

Leo Bring about the changes you've been longing for. Beef up your résumé or pick up skills that will qualify you for a position you desire. Present what you have to offer.

Virgo You'll be offered a bad deal. Ask questions and gather the facts before you make a major decision. Emotionally fueled spending will lead to loss and regret.

Libra Network, express your feelings and reach out to those who can contribute to your plans. Don't neglect your duties at home, or complaints will be made.

Scorpio Discussions will be informative, but before you take someone's word, consider the source and think about if exaggeration has played a role. Rely on your gut feeling.

Sagittarius Home is where the heart is, and making your abode more efficient will pay off. If you are proactive, you will reach a new level of comfort and convenience.

Capricorn Avoid excessive people. Stick to what you know, and avoid making a change based on hearsay or conjecture. Trust your gut feelings when dealing with others.

Aquarius Emotional energy will help you push your way to the top. Whether you are helping others or expanding your own interests, give it your all.

Pisces Someone will take advantage of you if you are too accommodating. Think twice before you spend time trying to get everyone to love you. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

I	D	L	E		C	I	R	C	E		M	E	G	S
L	O	O	N		O	C	E	A	N		O	L	L	A
S	L	U	R		M	U	O	N	S		C	H	U	G
A	T	T	I	L	A			A	U	S	S	I	E	S
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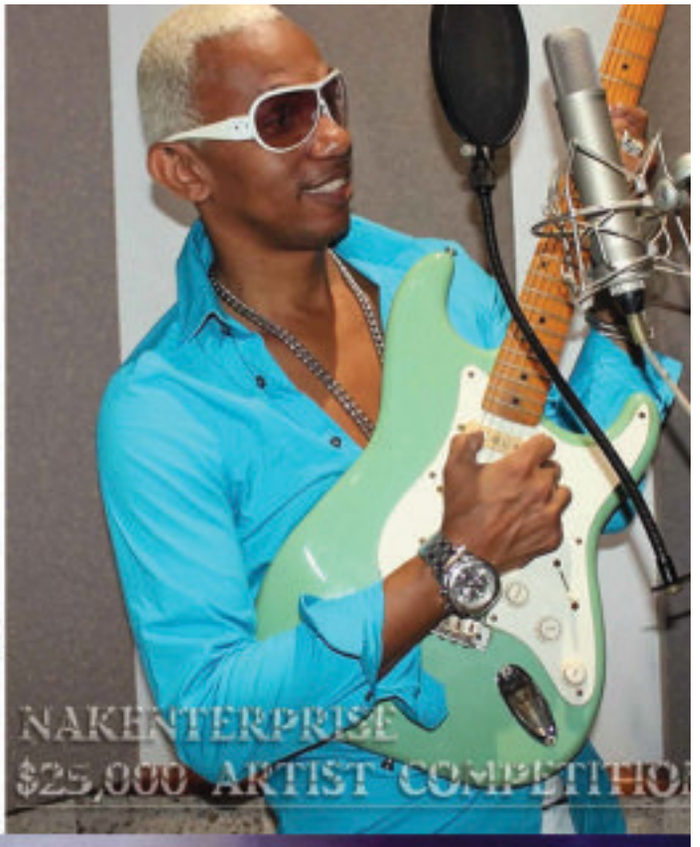

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